



Edited by  
PATRICIA A. ADLER, PETER ADLER, and PATRICK K. O'BRIEN

# DRUGS AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

AN ANTHOLOGY

WILEY-BLACKWELL

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 **WILEY-BLACKWELL**

A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2012  
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*Registered Office*  
John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

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350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA  
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*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Drugs and the American dream : an anthology / edited by Patricia A. Adler, Peter Adler, and Patrick K. O'Brien.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-470-67027-9 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Drug abuse--Social aspects--United States.
2. Drug abuse--United States.
3. Drug control--United States.
4. Alcoholism--Social aspects--United States.

I. Adler, Patricia A. II. Adler, Peter, 1951-- III. O'Brien, Patrick K.

HV5825.D7898 2012

362.290973--dc23

2011044221

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Set in 10/12pt Bembo by SPi Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India  
Printed and bound in Singapore by Markono Print Media Pte Ltd

## College Alcohol Use and the Embodiment of Hegemonic Masculinity among European American Men

Robert L. Peralta

Serving as an interesting contrast to Vecitis, Robert Peralta offers a portrait of college men and one of the ways they assert their masculinity: through drug consumption. Despite the wax and wane of various waves of drug popularity, alcohol remains the most widely consumed college intoxicant and the problem of binge drinking has drawn repeated attention from numerous groups. Yet Peralta discusses how and why it forms such a cornerstone of male college culture. Based on your own experiences, you may want to reflect on the relation between his portrayal and your impressions of the scene. You may also want to ask yourself about how this image of masculinity, as well as that depicted for the bodybuilders, stands in the pantheon of versions of how men enact masculinity. How, then, does the type of alcohol consumption described here stratify college men into different rungs on the hierarchy of prestige? What norms do you see in colleges that promote some kinds of drinking over others or over abstinence?

Comparing the gender roles portrayed in these last two pieces, how do you think the move into drug consumption beyond moderate levels is viewed differently for men and women? How are norms for drinking alcohol different for college men and women? What role do men generally have in obtaining and distributing drugs like alcohol and others (at frat parties, house parties, bars) and how does this affect their gender status and power? Finally, why do you think the binge drinking discussed by Peralta is so social compared to the instrumental drug use discussed by Vecitis?

The reduction of alcohol-related problems among college students remains a formidable task. "Alcohol-related problems among college students" may be a euphemism for "European American (EA) college students who are men" given that the vast majority of college students are EA and those students who experience alcohol related problems are

disproportionately EA men. An important aspect in promoting social and behavioral change is to understand the racialized and gendered underpinnings that shape the desire to engage in heavy drinking in college. [3]

The literature suggests that alcohol use or abstinence from alcohol has been used for gender construction purposes. Although college campuses have been

described in the literature as settings where men and women "do gender" (West and Zimmerman 1987), alcohol use among college students has received relatively little gender accomplishment analysis.

[...]

A nationally representative study showed that 42.7% of students had been binge drinking in the 2 weeks before they were surveyed. Twenty percent of these students binged three times or more per month. Gender differences in alcohol consumption by college students continue to be reported routinely in the literature, although differences are dwindling. Nineteen percent of female students and 24% of male students in one nationally representative study reported frequent "binge drinking" (defined as imbibing five or more drinks in a single sitting for men and four for women) three or more times in a 2 week period. Twenty-three percent of those who drank three times per week drank ten or more drinks per week.

Although these studies provide important insight into college students' drinking, large nationally representative studies of college students overlook important sociological issues that pertain to gender. For instance, Wechsler et al.'s (1995) analysis of gender in college students' alcohol use is limited to only three gender-specific qualifications. The first is a gender-adjusted measurement for "binge drinking" (described above). Second, Wechsler reported prevalence differences between men and women where women had a slightly lower prevalence rate of abusive drinking. Third, Wechsler's data suggest that women face a disproportionately greater risk than men do for violent victimization.

Survey research has shown significant differences by gender, however the researchers have not satisfactorily interpreted the nuanced impact of gender on the epidemiological distribution of drinking. In other words, we stand to gain from a more sophisticated understanding of the way in which drinking is implicated in creating and sustaining variant forms of masculinity. Although we know that gender differences exist, we have not fully understood their origins, their meanings, or the ways in which men's drinking exists in relation to women's or subjugated men's drinking. Given the pronounced and routine differences reported in the scientific literature, it is important to investigate how gender accomplishment influences drinking

behavior among college students. This approach provides insight into the meaning of alcohol use that is not possible within the traditional epidemiological approaches used by Wechsler and others.

[...]

## The Current Study

In the present study of alcohol use, I took an interactionist approach to view gender as (1) dynamic, (2) as emerging from situated interaction, and (3) as produced and reinforced through accomplishment. I interpret students' accounts of alcohol use as reflections of their conceptualization of gender and the alcohol-related behaviors as necessary to engage in doing masculinity. I argue that alcohol is used by EA male students to align with hegemonic standards of masculinity. I use accounts from EA men and subjugated men and women (e.g., African American [AA], gay) enrolled in an institution of higher education to illustrate this process.

The purpose of this research was to explore the process of local hegemonic masculinity construction (as opposed to regional or national constructions) via alcohol use among a diverse sample of college students. Is the process of drinking and, in particular, heavy drinking a form of masculinity construction? Are ideological assumptions about masculinity expressed through drinking behavior in a social location where such expressions are accepted, legitimized, and often expected? Does heavy alcohol use among men become a resource where presumed "essential" characteristics of manhood can be expressed? Juxtaposing the experiences of AA, EA, homosexual, and heterosexual men and women was a critical aspect of analyzing the local construction of this form of masculinity.

## Method

### Participants

Respondents were a volunteer sample of 78 undergraduate students at a medium sized state university in the mid-Atlantic region of the US.

Sixty-nine percent ( $N=55$ ) of the total sample was EA, and 27% ( $N=20$ ) was AA. Forty-four men and 34 women participated. Seventy-two percent ( $N=56$ ) self-identified as heterosexual, 22% ( $N=17$ ) self-identified as gay or lesbian, and the remaining 6% ( $N=5$ ) self-identified as bisexual. Two respondents were both Hispanic and gay. One respondent was self-identified as a gay Asian man. Two AA men identified as gay; the remaining gay participants were EA ( $N=17$ ; ten EA gay men; seven EA lesbians).

The respondents were evenly distributed across the college years; almost one-third were either freshmen ( $N=24$ ) or seniors ( $N=25$ ), 15% were sophomores ( $N=11$ ), and 22% were juniors ( $N=18$ ). The average age was at the median point of age of traditional college students: 20 years, 5 months. Fifteen percent ( $N=11$ ) of the sample reported that they were members of a fraternity or sorority. Nearly all (95%) respondents reported themselves as "middle" or "upper-middle" class.

[...]

A semi-structured, open-ended interview guide that consisted of 12 main questions was developed and pilot tested by the author of the present study. Demographic questions were asked in addition to questions about drinking quantity and frequency, attitudes toward drinking, reasons for drinking, expectations of alcohol use, and consequences of drinking such as blackouts, inability to stop using, injuries, and failure to meet responsibilities. Questions were expanded through the use of probes and projective questioning to reduce the response effect of sensitive questions (e.g., I asked questions about friends' use of alcohol in addition to questions about interviewees' own use of alcohol).

## Results

The data presented here are based on over 100 hours of interview data. Three themes that emerged from the interviews are reported here. I grouped the findings into three distinct – yet interrelated – categories to demonstrate how masculinity operates and is understood within the context of alcohol use and heavy alcohol use. These three themes together exemplify the association between alcohol use and the

embodiment of hegemonic masculinity construction for a specific group of men: EA college men.

### Markers of embodied masculinity: Stories and trophies

Drinking and heavy drinking is understood to be a form of "macho" or masculine behavior. [...] Thus men and women alike believe that drinking, especially heavy drinking, is indicative of masculinity accomplishment for those who drink. Thus *evidence* of heavy drinking via stories and trophies (e.g., physical evidence of alcohol use) are used as markers of masculinity.

Because the majority of students in this sample asserted that alcohol use expresses a form of "macho" or masculine behavior (70%), these data suggest that drinking is within the repertoire of behaviors associated with "masculinity" as it is defined in this specific college environment. Although many students' associated drinking with (EA) masculinity, the tone of men's responses differed from that of women's responses. Men's stories about their own alcohol use and the use of alcohol by their peers were in reference to their own perceived power and strength as men. This power was evidenced by the extent to which their *bodies* could endure and withstand the effects of alcohol consumption. These qualities were demonstrated by their stated ability not only to withstand heavy alcohol use, but also to *enjoy* the act of drinking heavily. For example, [...] Keith, an EA heterosexual student, said:

One night last semester we started drinking at 10 A.M. and didn't stop until 4 A.M. the next day! It was like 18 hours of drinking. That was straight beer. The hard alcohol part started out at a brewery...we had three beers there, then we bought a 6-pack at a liquor store, went to a micro brewery, had three big beers there, had dinner, went to a bar, and started doing shots, and then went to some other bar, and after that we don't remember. We just woke up. And this one time, I put down a whole bottle of vodka just straight down!

EA male undergraduates talked about their alcohol use as if "drinking" and "getting drunk" were badges of honor. It is perhaps not surprising that it was EA men who more often discussed alcohol as an approach

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to a local construction of hegemonic masculinity, as previous researchers have found that EA college men are among the heaviest of drinkers. EA men's drinking accounts often had the tone of battle stories told by war veterans. They were more likely to discuss their alcohol use and their male friends' alcohol use with awe and as symbols of essential masculine strength, ability, stamina, and, most important, power.

Drinking stories for men are important because they are expressions of a specific type of masculine identity — one that is wild, tough, popular, youthful, aggressive, competitive, confident, and anti-feminine. [...] The telling of drinking stories, particularly heavy drinking stories, is part of the imagery of gender accomplishment for this particular local setting. The reference group is specific: the college students' peers. This style of drinking did not take place in front of older adults. This is important and perhaps relevant to the tone of their accounts. Students may have exaggerated their drinking experiences. But regardless of the actual amount consumed, their efforts to convey a particular image reflect "doing gender" in general, and "doing masculinity" in particular. [...]

Men counted the number of bottles consumed as evidence of masculinity accomplishment. In the need to address masculine standards as defined by their reference group, empty alcohol containers were used as symbolic markers of achieving that goal. These men drew a sense of pride from the amount and frequency of alcohol use. Kristen (EA, heterosexual) substantiated this observation by saying: "Guys value that (drinking) more than girls. Guys pride themselves on that and they have to prove they can drink and hold their liquor." The types (e.g., beer versus wine coolers) of drinks appear to serve as trophies as well. Take Karen's statement (EA, heterosexual) as an example: "Girls are supposed to drink girly drinks, and guys are supposed to drink beer."

Many men interviewed were brimming with pride when they discussed their heavy alcohol use. If excessive alcohol use among men is perceived to be an expression of masculinity, power, and authority, what is the perception of women's alcohol use according to respondents? Women who openly drink heavily were regarded as infringing upon traditional masculine behavior according to both male and female respondents. Seth, an AA man, for example, said:

I think that if a female is tanked [drunk], like I don't think that she is at all attractive. I'm not being sexist, but there is something about a woman chugging back a beer that looks so masculine, you know what I mean? Just like why doesn't she just burp or fart in front of everybody or something? Men drink. They get violent, rape. When women drink, that is really masculine. It looks masculine.

It appears Seth, similar to other male respondents, does not approve of women drinking because it violates gender norms, which calls into question her gender status and also his.

Alcohol was often said to be the primary reason for men's get-togethers. Masculinities, however, were understood by women to be embodied in men's ability to tolerate heavy alcohol use. Respondents assumed that men's bodies can absorb more alcohol than women's and are more likely to withstand its effects. Succinctly put: Men reminisced proudly and boasted about their alcohol use in terms of masculinity accomplishment. The use of it in and of itself was meaningful. Heavy alcohol use demonstrated bodily power and superiority. Ironically, however, heavy and prolonged alcohol use in fact *weakens* one's body.

#### "Liquid courage," "beer muscles," and "case races": Alcohol induced risky behavior, aggression, and competition

Body practices such as risk-taking behavior in the context of alcohol use were evident in the present study. The gender and masculinities literatures illustrate how hegemonic masculinity emphasizes the representation and use of men's bodies as a process of social embodiment. Male students "do" a specific type of masculinity by reproducing hierarchical images of what a "real man" is thought capable of doing. Here, alcohol use is assumed to fuel strength, aggression, and confidence, creating contexts where risky behaviors are more apt. In this context, competitive activities surrounding alcohol use also emerge. [...]

Risk-taking behavior and feeling invincible are central to the construction and embodiment of local masculinities. With what is known about the deleterious effects of heavy and long term alcohol use, alcohol is a form of risk-taking in and of itself. [...]

The vast majority of students discussed the associations among alcohol use, risky behaviors, and the induced sense of courage or "invincibility" that occurred particularly among EA men. [...]

Being "courageous" and engaging in risk-taking behavior are indicative of local hegemonic masculinity. Courage is a sign of power and thus a potent ingredient of masculinity. "Liquid Courage" was defined by students as the courage that emerges because of alcohol use. [...] "Invincibility" was a term used frequently by both men and women to describe feelings that "men" express when binge drinking. Again, the male body is implicated in the embodiment of gender as illustrated in the accounts that follow. Consider Henry's (EA, heterosexual) account:

I've done all kinds of stupid things [when drinking]. One of my friends was driving my jeep, and I tried to jump out of it and into my friend's pick up doing like 80 on the freeway. We used to do flips off my roof and into the pool back home. We used to do all kinds of stupid stuff.

Commitment to risk-taking practices as a means of establishing a masculine reputation in a peer group context was evident in students' accounts. These behaviors appeared to be expected, as evidenced by respondents' assumptions about the "natural" links between masculinity, alcohol use, and risk-taking. These assumptions are a product of negotiations between EA men, women, and other subordinated groups. The power of expectations should thus not be underestimated. There is no emphasized effort to curtail or prevent alcohol-related behaviors because so many expect it to occur as part of a "natural" byproduct of men's drinking. The statements below exemplify this. Jerry, an EA, heterosexual fraternity brother, stated:

When you are wasted, that's when you have a head change. Alcohol brings out the mean side. It definitely causes problems...it definitely gives you beer muscles. People think that they can fight better, can be tougher. They can take a beating and they just feel invincible a lot of times. I mean it happens to me, it happens to everyone I know.

[...]

Drinking and driving is a criminal act predominantly committed by men and perhaps tied to the construction of gender. The alcohol-related act is rebellious, risky, and may serve as a sign of bravado signified by the willingness to overcome the effects of alcohol and or evade formal control agents such as police officers. Shana, an AA heterosexual female student, elaborated upon this theme while making connections among men's alcohol use, masculinity, power, and violence. The capacity for violence is a part of the masculine construct. The link between violence and substance use, particularly alcohol use, has been well documented. [...] Shana evoked this link as follows:

... the *main* reason why I don't like dating guys who drink is because a lot of them do get aggressive...I know that if I was ever in a situation where (my intimate partner became intoxicated) they better not hit me for no other reason...I am not giving them that excuse, I'm not going for it either way. I don't care if you are in your right mind or not! I think that (alcohol and violence) is a bad combination. Especially when it is like a man against a woman. I think especially with guys... when they are drunk you know their drinking gives them this power I guess (laughter), and you know...they just start hitting everybody... I feel that they think they have this power or something when they drink.

[...]

Because the concept of hegemonic masculinity is based on a practice that permits men's collective dominance over "others" to continue, it is not surprising that, in some contexts, hegemonic masculinity refers to men's engagement in toxic practices including physical violence, which works to stabilize gender dominance in particular settings. Sexual violence and sexual risk-taking emerged as themes as well. Consider the following account that illustrates this from an EA, heterosexual woman recruited from the Dean of students' office.

DAYE: I know too much about what goes on with alcohol and sexual aggression at frat parties and alcohol contributes to that, like my guy friends act invincible when they drink...and with the sorority and fraternity stereotypes of girls are good and boys can be bad, I had a friend who was raped by a fraternity brother.



Many students discussed the centrality of drinking games in the culture of college drinking. Drinking games are contests where the ability to tolerate alcohol is instrumental in the social embodiment of masculinity. Students talked about the importance of drinking games in expressing power and control as evidenced by the male body's ability to withstand intoxication. [...] Competition and risk-taking are characteristics of local forms of masculinity expression, and alcohol appears to be used as a vehicle to approximate the local ideal of masculinity situated in the context of the college environment. Janice, an EA female student, said:

Males go on longer (drink for longer periods), and they would take the drinking (game) more seriously. Who wins tells you who can hold their liquor better. I know for myself and a lot of my girlfriends, you kind of fake it, like you were full or you couldn't do it anymore you would fake it. And guys, they drink the beer till it is gone. I think it was more of a guy thing; they took the games more seriously than girls. It is all about winning for the guys. They think it is everything.

[...]

Drinking games illustrate how ideological hegemonies present dominant interests as everyone's interests. Drinking heavily is expected, as it is the point of the game in the local context of "the party." Sanctions are imposed upon those who do not participate in these games or align themselves with hegemonic standards in general. To avoid sanctions, many students discussed turning to alcohol as a means of compensating for the lack of fundamental components of hegemonic masculinity, such as heterosexual identity.

#### **"Two-beer queers" versus "real drinkers": Exaltation and stigmatization of drinking and non-drinking behavior**

Alcohol is a readily available and socially legitimized tool that is gendered in terms of how and when it is used. Its use (particularly its heavy use) was observed to be associated with demonstrations of power, whereas abstention or light use was associated with "weakness" or otherness. Who drinks, who drinks heavily, who drinks frequently, who can withstand heavy alcohol

use, and who can relationally distance themselves from drinking styles characterized as feminine are important components of the gender work discussed here.

Gough and Edwards (1998) found that men's bonding talk and/or talk about alcohol-related activity demonstrates the dependence of hegemonic masculinities on the discursive subordination of the "other," most notably women and gay men. Similarly, most students who engaged in the drinking culture marginalized those who do not drink by decrying the latter as outcasts. Students were relegated to, or relegated themselves to, less influential, less popular, less glorified, less powerful positions of college life (as defined by the students). If a student did drink, that is, if the student adopts the notion that drinking is and should be a dominant activity to be taken seriously, then he or she is rewarded with a prized social life, social outlets, networking opportunities, status, and positive reputation.

[...]

Gender theorists have called for theorizing about the embodiment involved in hegemony. For boys and young men, skilled bodily activity becomes a prime indicator of masculinity. This is instrumental in the linking of heterosexuality and masculinity in Western cultures and how prestige is conferred onto boys and young men (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Bodies are both agents in social practice and objects of social practice. Alcohol use is a conspicuous way to display endurance and strong bodies in young men's leisure practices. It is the practice of social embodiment involving institutions such as higher education and legitimized alcohol use on which their privilege as EA heterosexual men rests.

[...]

Sean, an EA gay man, reinforced how alcohol use is viewed as an important aspect of being the "standard" type of man. Consider his thought about what it is heterosexual "men" do:

during the past 2 years, I have kind of stopped hanging out with straight men, and I'm not quite sure why. I think part of it is because they do nothing but drink. I don't mean to make stereotypes or anything, but the straight guys I used to hang with, their social life revolved around drinking. So lately I have been hanging out mostly with women.

It is important to note Sean's reference to "straight guys" and the behavior he believes to be associated with "straight guys" (i.e., heavy alcohol use). This differs from his perception of how women use alcohol, hence his conscious decision to socialize with those who are assumed to drink little or not at all – women. Sean relied on the stereotype that heterosexual men engage in drinking behavior and that this behavior is normative. Additional evidence that drinking heavily is indicative of youthful EA heterosexual masculinity was provided by James, a heterosexual EA man.

JAMES: (A terrible drunk is when a person after using alcohol) can't walk, can't talk. (They) spill other people's beer (due to their intoxication). You spill it on yourself. You know, (when some one behaves like) the old "two-beer queer".

INTERVIEWER: "Two-beer queer?"

JAMES: You never heard that expression, the "two-beer queer?" (For instance, if I were to say) "That girl is a "two-beer queer" (it means) she can't hold her drink; she has no tolerance, um, that's what it is, having no tolerance.

"Two-beer queers" are a subset of the population who are less able to handle liquor in the prescribed masculine tradition. That is, those who literally cannot withstand a total of two beers are not in compliance with hegemonic expectations. This "lesser" group is linked with a pejorative (i.e., "two-beer queer"), not because it rhymes but because queers are an inferior class of people (i.e., males who are not really men). In the account, gay men (as understood by the term "queer") and all women are referred to with the derogatory "two-beer queer" as a way to distinguish collectively between those who can drink (i.e., hegemonic men) and those unable to "handle" excessive alcohol consumption. It is believed that heavy alcohol use and the concurrent maintenance of control thus "make the man" and simultaneously define those who do not meet the ideal hegemonic masculine standard. Consider Fran's statement (EA, heterosexual).

FRAN: It is a good thing if you can hold your own with the guys. If you are taking too long to finish your beer, they will ask, "Do you need a nipple for that beer?" because you are taking too long to finish it.

[...]

## Discussion

The present article expands upon the existing gender and alcohol research by integrating the study of drinking with the broader issue of gender construction, specifically the embodiment of masculinity. In the present study, I examined alcohol's role as a resource in the expression of hegemonic masculinity among men in comparison with subjugated masculinities and femininities. I discuss the role of alcohol, as both a substance and a symbol. This research follows the symbolic interactionist tradition where alcohol is viewed as a symbol through which meaning (hegemonic masculinity) is created in the privileged local context of the college campus.

Hegemonic masculinities do not exist in the statistical sense, yet their qualities are considered normative. Masculinity is defined as a configuration of practice organized in relation to the structure of gender relations. Masculinity needs to be reproduced actively in social settings. For youth, sport is among the most common means of masculinity reproduction. Among youth in college, the prevalence and centrality of drinking alcohol suggests that it is an area in which masculinity will be an issue. [...]

In the study of masculinity, it is useful to differentiate hegemonic masculinity from subordinated masculinities. The hierarchy of masculinities is a pattern of hegemony (i.e., unquestioned) and not a pattern of simple domination based on force. Hegemony works through the use of exemplars of masculinity – symbols have authority despite the fact most boys and men do not fully live up to them. "Cultural consent, discursive centrality, institutionalization, and the marginalization or delegitimation of alternatives are widely documented features of socially dominant masculinities" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, p. 846). This research highlights these inter-relationships through an analysis of accounts of alcohol use.

I argue that the process of drinking and, in particular, heavy drinking for EA college men is a form of embodied masculinity construction. Ideological assumptions about masculinity are expressed through drinking behavior in a social location where such expressions are accepted, legitimized, and often expected. Heavy alcohol use

among men becomes a resource where presumed "essential" characteristics of "manhood" can be expressed. In addition, how men and women discuss drinking behaviors illustrates the nuanced nature of gender performance.

[...]

It is important to understand masculinity in terms of its supposed antithesis, the construction of femininity. In contrast to men's accounts, EA and AA women did not assert that women's heavy alcohol use was a way to express power. Their drinking stories did not symbolize strength or power as women. Women largely viewed heavy drinking among women as potentially problematic, shameful, and stigmatizing behavior unbecoming of women.<sup>1</sup> Some women had fond memories of the "party atmosphere" associated with drinking, but did not present alcohol use as symbols of femininity. Drinking was not the focus of their social events. For women, drinking was secondary to the primary goal, which was to socialize and/or meet potential romantic partners. During these interviews, the majority of women simply did not espouse gender pride through their drinking accounts as did the men. Women's accounts of alcohol use did not reflect feminine accomplishment; they did, however, reflect a form of masculinity.

For many women, the costs associated with drinking, both physical and educational, were often discussed. Thus, many women discussed controlling and managing drinking. It appears women do gender by limiting their alcohol intake so as not to appear as bad, promiscuous, or masculine women. The handicapping of women's alcohol intake in drinking games may also be a means of accomplishing femininity.

[...]

Research routinely suggests that marriage significantly reduces the quantity and frequency of drinking (known as the "marriage effect") across social strata (Leonard and Rothbard 1999). Note that this is a different local setting with different gender relations. In this setting, heterosexual intimate relationships and fathering children are prominent symbols of hegemonic masculinity. Indeed, marriage and family are not prominent features of collegiate lifestyles and are therefore not typically associated with masculinity accomplishment for this population. Perhaps marriage

and family replace alcohol as symbols of masculinity in a culture where if one's (masculine) gender is questioned, one's (masculine) identity is threatened.

These considerations are relevant to the sociology of alcohol use and gender. Drinking behaviors appear to have the potential to reinforce, create, or challenge existing dominant hierarchical systems of gender. How much alcohol is used and how often, for example, relays culturally understood messages about identity. By choosing to drink or not to drink, individuals position themselves in the larger context of dominant, subordinated, sexualized, and racialized categories. These behaviors thereby reemphasize and normalize the domination of men over women and other types of men.

[...]

The question of race and drinking is of relevance here. Studies suggest that young racial and ethnic minorities tend to drink less than their EA counterparts. Social structural conditions shape the understanding of what gender means and inform how gender work is carried out differently depending on demographic differences. Gender accomplishment depends upon cultural definitions of gender and the availability of resources necessary to meet those standards. Because socially acceptable resources, skills, and physiological assets needed to "do gender" are limited and/or unequally distributed, masculine and feminine definitions often differ across categories of race, class, and sexuality. This may be indicative of why minority students tend to drink less often than their EA counterparts. Models of gender that differ from those adopted by dominant members of society could help to explain the disparity.

[...]

## Note

- 1 It is interesting to note here that the gender gap in drinking for young people in the US appears to be closing for this age group. This may be in line with research that suggests that it is more acceptable for women to adopt traditionally masculine activities than it is for men to adopt activities traditionally reserved for women. However, women in the present study were subject to social control from other women and men.

Although drinking was tolerated, women were likely to be stigmatized more readily for heavy drinking often referred to as "sloppy" drinking.

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## Questions

- 1 How was hegemonic masculinity personified through heavy drinking practices for undergraduate men? Do you think undergraduate women drink in a similar manner, or do they develop distinct drinking practices?
- 2 Do you think men need to control and manage their alcohol intake to maintain masculinity? Do women need to control and manage their intoxication to maintain femininity? Why or why not?
- 3 How do the norms and informal rules of the college party scene influence drinking behavior? How is good and/or bad drinking learned in the college years?